

latter are called *Koblee*, and are not remarkable for their fidelity, a point which causes their husbands to be looked down on.

The tonnage for boats on the river is calculated by a measure called *Kharar*,* which in the measurement of boats is equal to three Bombay candies, making the *Kharar* — lbs. English.

But at Kurrachee the tonnage is calculated in candies. The following measures are in use at Kurrachee. Four Chotallo, one Pattee; sixteen Pattee, one Kassa; sixty Kassa one *Kharar*; one *Kharar*, ninety Bombay maunds.

In measuring grain the *Kharar* varies in size, thus; bajery and wheat three and a half candies one *kharar*; rice, three and a three-quarter candies one *kharar*.

Description of Boats belonging to the harbour of Kurrachee.

Kotia.—The *Kotia* resembles botells used in India, it has a flat stern and round bottom, and does not fall over much, when ground.

Dinjee.—The *Dinjee* is sharp bowed, bottom, and stern, and must be supported by props when aground, like the *pallymar* used in India, excepting having a high stem or poop.

The former are heavy sailers, the latter speedy.

CAMP KURRACHEE,

December 26th, 1839.

Narrative of facts attending the Wreck of the Transport "Indian Oak" on the Loochoo Islands; communicated from the Political Secretariat Office, Government of India.

TO C. B. GREENLAW, ESQ.,

Secretary to the Marine Board, Calcutta.

SIR,

The last letter I had the honor to forward to your address, was from Singapore, dated 23rd June; on the following day I sailed for Macao in the transport "Hooghly," taking with me the transport "Clifton," as directed by His Excellency the Admiral and Commander-in-Chief; and arrived with the above ships at Macao on the 12th July, where I received further instructions to proceed with the ships under my orders to Chu-

* "Khur waw" literally.

san, and arrived at the latter port on the 28th July, where I joined the Admiral and fleet. His Excellency the Admiral directed me to return to Singapore, and assume the duties of Resident Agent for transports at that port; in pursuance of which, I was directed by Commodore Sir J. J. G. Bremer to join the transport "Indian Oak" for a passage to the latter place. We sailed from Chusan on the 10th of August, and on the 14th instant following, I regret to say, were wrecked on the Great Loochoo Island, in lat. $26^{\circ} 21' 46''$ N., about 10 miles to the northward of the principal place, Napakiang; and longitude by the "Indian Oak's" chronometer $127^{\circ} 12' 45''$ E., which now proved to have been full thirty miles too far west. For particulars, I cannot do better than refer you to the enclosed copy of a letter addressed to Commodore Sir J. J. G. Bremer, forwarded through the chief officer, Mr. Field, who succeeded in making Chusan in the launch, and returned to our relief with H. M's. ships "Nimrod" and "Cruizer" on the 16th September. As the junk mentioned in my letter to the Commodore had been built, and nearly completed, in which it was our intention to have proceeded to Singapore, Captain Barlow, senior officer, was of opinion, that she might be useful to the force at Chusan, and determined on sending the "Cruizer" back with the mails and despatches on the following day, and remain to accompany the junk. When all being completed, and the stores and crew of the "Indian Oak" embarked on the junk, I, with Mr. Payne my writer, embarked on the "Nimrod," and sailed on the 29th of September for Chusan, where H. M's. ship "Nimrod," with the junk "Loochoo," arrived on the 5th instant.

I should not do justice to my own feelings, or to those kind Islanders, the Loochooers, were I to omit stating, and bringing to the notice of government, the very great kindness and hospitality received from the moment of our landing to the date of our departure, which was uniform from the first to the last, with the exception that we were not allowed to pass into the interior, or exceed the limits of our compound beyond the wreck; our own countrymen could not have been kinder. They not only built a vessel of 150 to 180 tons burthen, but gave us a plentiful supply of provisions during our stay of forty-six days on the island, and one month's provision for every person in the junk; they also furnished H. M's. ships with water and fresh supplies during their stay, declining to receive any thing in the shape of payment

in return ; stating they neither wanted gold or silver, but in the event of any of their own vessels falling on the coasts of any of our settlements in distress, that we would treat their people with the same kindness, and send them back to their country. The only return they accepted was a telescope from myself, and one presented by Captain Barlow, with twelve copies of the Saturday and Penny Magazines, a small print, and a looking glass in the name of Her Britannic Majesty.

In conclusion, I can only regret my inability to do full justice to those kind, hospitable, and good people. In my letter to Sir J. J. Gordon Bremer, I stated the latitude of the wreck to have been $26^{\circ} 11'$, which is wrong, and which mistake was occasioned by an error in the sextant, that I did not discover until after the departure of the long boat ; the true latitude however is $26^{\circ} 21' 46''$ N. both by double altitudes and altitudes of the Pole Star, all taken on a false horizon, at the village of Peekoo.

As I have kept a journal of occurrences during our stay in Loochoo, should it be requisite, I shall be able to furnish full particulars of every occurrence, winds, weather, &c., that took place until my departure in H. M's. "ship Nimrod." His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief has directed, that I should hold myself in readiness to proceed to Manilla, with two or three transports, in which sick troops are to be embarked for a change of air and fresh supplies. On receiving further instructions, I shall not fail to apprise you of my movements by the first opportunity.

H. Co's. Transport, Futty Salam,

CHUSAN HARBOUR.

19th, October, 1840.

(Signed) J. J. R. BOWMAN,

Agt. for Transports, Eastern Expedition.

TO SIR J. J. G. BREMER, K.C.B. & K.C.H.

Commodore of the 1st Class.

SIR,

It is with sincere and deep regret, that I have to report the loss of H. M's. transport, "Indian Oak," R. Grainger, Master, on one of the Loochoo Islands, on the 14th instant, about 11 A.M. The following heads of occurrences will I hope afford you all the information I am at present able to give, on this most unfortunate event.

Monday, 10th August. Parted company with H. M's. ship "Alligator," off Keeto Point, Chusan, and passed out, between the Buffalo's Nose and the Quesan Islands.

At 9 P.M. the S. Easternmost Island, Pata-hecock, bore EbN. 4 to 5 miles, blowing a fresh breeze from the northward, steered SEbE.

Noon, Tuesday 11th.—In Lat. by Obs. $28^{\circ} 26' 17''$; Long. Ch. $123^{\circ} 24' 15''$ E. departure taken from Chusan said to be in $122^{\circ} 6'$ E. of Greenwich; at this time blowing a hard gale from NNE. with a high sea; the ship was reduced to close-reefed topsails, and topgallant yards sent down on deck. Bar. $29^{\circ} 63'$.

Midnight. Severe gale and high sea, Bar. $29^{\circ} 50'$.

Noon, Wednesday 12th.—Lat. Obs. $27^{\circ} 13' 22''$ N.; Long. Ch. $124^{\circ} 55' 45''$ E.; Bar. $29^{\circ} 40'$; ship's main rigging very slack, and in great danger of losing the main-mast; sent down the gallant mast, and swifted the rigging in. Furled the fore and mizen-topsails, and hove to under close-reefed main-topsails.

Midnight. Gale very severe from the northward, blowing in gusts, with rain and a very high sea. Bar. $29^{\circ} 35'$.

Noon, Thursday 13th.—Lat. Obs. $26^{\circ} 29'$, N.; Long. Ch. $124^{\circ} 51'$ E.; Bar. $29^{\circ} 35'$, P.M. 3, somewhat more moderate, set the fore-topsail and steered EbS.

6 P.M. Set fore-sail, and at 10 P.M. set the main-sail. Midnight strong gales and hard squalls.

Friday, 14th.—10 A.M. course per log, from noon of yesterday, allowing one point lee-way for the heave of the sea, placed the ship in as follows:—Course per log $166^{\circ} 30'$ E. 121 miles. Lat. D. R. $26^{\circ} 51'$ N.; Long. R. R. $127^{\circ} 2'$, from which Capt. Grainger considered himself well to the SW. of the Loochoo Group, when in the act of working up the above reckoning, discoloured water was reported by the officer of the watch, and the ship immediately hauled up SSW. the wind previously having hauled to the NW. in a very severe squall, shifted to the westward of the ship, broke off the SSE.; land and breakers were now seen on our lee quarter, extending to SSW. on our weather bow; wore ship and stood to the northward, at this time the fore-topmast staysail, fore-topsail, and foresail, were blown out of the bolt ropes; found ourselves unable to weather the north point of the Island, off which was a long extent of heavy breakers, and a very high sea

running; the weather being so very thick, the land was scarcely discernible, although not more than three miles off. Finding ourselves embayed, and no possibility of saving the ship, wore with the hope of saving the lives of the crew, and stood to the southward for what appeared an opening, but which proved only a small inlet or bay, full of breakers. The heavy sea and the want of sail, setting us fast on the shore, between 10-30, and 11 A. M. struck on an extensive rocky ledge, extending about two miles from the shore, with numerous rocky patches, just a-wash. The sea now made a clean breach over the ship; she shortly after fell over on her beam-ends, and broke her back about the chess tree, the fore part falling in deep water. Cut away the main mast, and some time after the mizen mast. All hands now collected aft, under the poop, and on the weather quarter and mizen chains. On the ship's falling over, lost the larboard quarter boat which was washed on shore, by which we observed the tide to be falling.

The gale now increasing to a severe hurricane, with heavy rain, our only remaining hope was in getting a rope on shore. The first attempt to carry a line on shore was made by William Bagburn (seaman sent from the *Blenham*) but owing to the strong drawback, failed, and was with some risk hauled in; a second attempt with the lead line was made by a lascar, who succeeded in reaching the shore (greatly exhausted and cut by the rocks) but lost the line. About this time a number of natives came down and motioned us to land. An attempt was now made to get the jolly boat out, which was stowed on the launch, but in doing so, she was stove to pieces. Several attempts were now made with hatches, gratings, and oars, all of which failed, owing to the line fouling the rocks; two more attempts were made, by two lascars, to carry the log line on shore, one of whom succeeded, and the end of the deep sea lead line got on shore, but which also fouled the rocks, and was thereby rendered useless. The tide coming in, all the Islanders with our two men left the reef; our only remaining hope being in the strength of the ship, and the after part holding together. As the tide came in, the wind and sea increased; the latter making a complete breach over all, fore and aft, and throwing pieces of sheathing and copper over the vessel in all directions. Finding it impossible to hold on longer on

the outside, all hands got under the poop, with the ship on her beam ends and deck nearly perpendicular.

As the tide came in, the sea gradually hove the vessel higher on the reef until she lodged on a small ledge of rocks. Our rudder was torn off with part of the counter shortly after striking, through which the sea rushed into the poop and lower cabins. Each sea that struck the vessel. Shook her very frame. Closely huddled together under the poop, were the commander, officers, passengers, and crew, drenched by every sea, and shivering with cold, most of us having thrown off all clothes, as it was likely to impede swimming. We remained in this state until about $\frac{1}{2}$ past 11 P.M., when the tide having receded, and the weather considerably moderated, we found ourselves much nearer the shore, and comparatively smooth under the lee. Sounded on the lee side, and found only from five to six feet water; immediately piped all hands on shore, the mizen mast, yards, and gaff forming a raft. All hands got on shore, including the sick, in safety, with exception of a few cuts and bruises from the rocks. All the crew and passengers having got on shore, myself, the commander and officers followed, and after walking about a mile over a rocky ledge, towards some lights at high water mark, were met by a party of the Islanders, and greeted with kind hospitality, hot tea and rice being served out to every man. Nothing can show their hospitality in a stronger light than the following:—I had nothing on but a shirt and drawers, drenched to the skin; one of the principal men noticing my situation, took off his outer jacket or coat, and insisted on my putting it on. After resting on the beach a short time, we were conducted to a comfortable dwelling, or court house, where dry clothing was given to all who stood in need, and we were again regaled with warm tea, rice, eggs, and fowls. Words are not adequate to express the kindness, attention, and hospitality we have received from the first moment of landing to the present time, from these kind and good people; their honesty is beyond praise,—articles of silver, gold, and wearing apparel strewed in every direction to dry, but not an article touched.

Most of our wearing apparel has been saved, but all more or less damaged from being drenched for several days in the sea. Several dozens of the Commander's wine and beer have also been saved, but I regret to say little of the ship's provisions. We are entirely

dependant on these good people, who have up to the present time supplied us abundantly.

For all further particulars, I refer you to the bearer, Mr. Field, first officer of the late ship "Indian Oak," whose conduct throughout this trying occasion has been most meritorious; and in nothing more so, than at present, in volunteering to proceed in the launch to Chusan, as the bearer of intelligence most unfortunate, and I fear of serious disappointment and loss to the expedition generally, which no one can feel more than myself. I can give you no description of the place, as we are not allowed to go beyond the limits of our dwelling, except to the wreck.

From altitudes taken in a false horizon for the Chronometer, and several altitudes of the Pole Star, I make the geographical position of our dwelling, about two miles east of the wreck, as follows:—

By a meridian altitude of the sun from the	}	26° 11' 34" N.
wreck, about 1¼ miles horizon,		

By several altitudes of the Pole Star taken	}	26° 11' 22" „
in an artificial horizon,		

Long. by Chronometer, 127° 12' 45" E.

from which I conclude we are on one of the small Islands to the westward of the Great Loochoo; but the natives whenever questioned, say we are on the larger Island, but jealous of our gaining any knowledge of their Island, invariably evade the question; they however have promised to build a vessel to take us to Singapore, of the following dimensions, which they say shall be ready in two months, viz. 65 feet long, 23 ditto broad, 7½ ditto hold.

I trust however Mr. Field will succeed in reaching Chusan in safety, from whence I feel assured speedy relief will be sent, with this hope, and full confidence in a good God,

I am, &c.

LOOCHOO ISLANDS, }
28th August, 1840. }

(Signed) J. J. R. BOWMAN,

Agent for Transports, Eastern Expedition.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I have been assured by one of the principal men, that we are on the Great Loochoo; this from what I can see of the land from the wreck, is my opinion, also; judging from Captain Hall's description of Napaking Harbour, the wreck lays a little to the southward of Abbey Point, in the above place. If I am right,

and what the islanders state is correct, the longitude shown by the "Indian Oak's" chronometer, must be twenty-five miles too far west. I have had no opportunity of getting a lunar as yet, but shall endeavour to do so by the first opportunity. I have also to add, that every circumstance relating to Chusan and the fleet, has been kept a secret from the Islanders, fearing it might operate against us, as they are tributary to China, and now fitting out two junks for Amoy. I trust however we shall be relieved from our present painful situation before these or other vessels return. Mr. Field, the bearer, I hope leaves to-morrow. I have the pleasure to state the dispatches and letters are saved, but more or less wet with sea-water.

(Signed) J. J. R. B.

Note.—I lose no time in publishing the above interesting narrative. The natives of the Loochoo Islands seem to preserve unimpaired the kindness of disposition, which distinguished them when Basil Hall visited that distant archipelago, although some greater degree of caution and strictness as respects intercourse with the interior, on the part of foreigners, seems now to obtain among them, than was the case when Englishmen first became intimately acquainted with them. Of Captain Beechey's subsequent visit, there exists I believe no published account; and although Mr. Tradescant Lay, the naturalist, who accompanied that officer, has published a notice of the Bonin Islands, he has not included (I speak from memory) in his work any detailed mention of the Loochooans. A narrative of the Russian Captain Creüsensturn's voyage to Loochoo has I believe appeared on the continent, but I have never seen the book. The accidental sojourn of Captain Bowman and his party among these kindly islanders, is an occurrence of much interest; and it is to be hoped that no Englishman will ever abuse their hospitality, nor fail to requite it, when the occasion may offer of returning it in kind.

